Cambridgeshire County Council

Cambridgeshire Culture

A commitment to cultural entitlements and partnerships for children and young people

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"States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and activities."

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by the UK Government.

Foreword

We recognise the value and transformational power of culture for children and young people and that participation in cultural activities helps to shape their identities and their contribution to society. We have a responsibility for ensuring that all children and young people have access to opportunities to enjoy and achieve through participation.

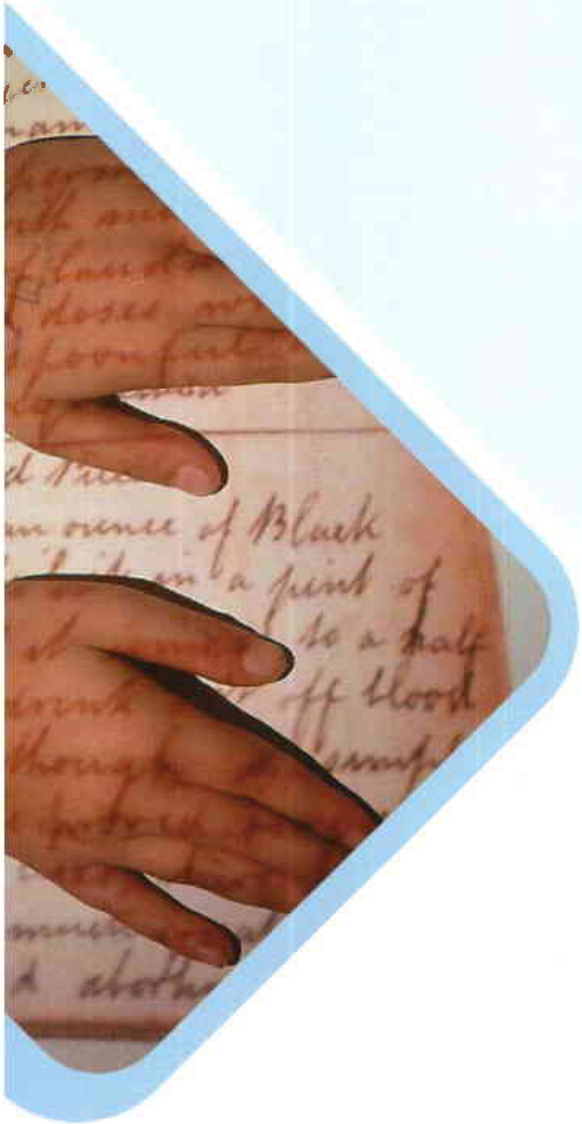
The Children Act 2004 sets out a national requirement for local providers to build programmes around the needs of children and young people. **Every Child Matters** and **Youth Matters** suggest radical change in how services support children and young people and aspire to place them and their needs centre stage. **Every Child Matters** highlights five outcomes: be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being. Cultural activities have a unique role to play in helping each child and young person to achieve these outcomes.

Our vision is for all children and young people in Cambridgeshire to have the opportunity to be able to participate in cultural experiences as a matter of right and we aspire to ensure an equitable provision of positive cultural activities for all. To help make our vision a reality we will provide support from within the County Council and we will also work with partners to develop and promote a broad range of high quality opportunities.

Councillor Jill Tuck
Leader of the Council

1. The Cambridgeshire Vision

All children and young people in Cambridgeshire should have opportunities to participate in a range of cultural activities



The entitlement

Our vision is that each child and young person growing up in Cambridgeshire, wherever they live and whatever their circumstances, will have opportunities to experience a range of cultural activities. This vision sits within the broader County Council commitment to raising the profile of the cultural agenda for people of all ages.

The Local Authority will actively support the development of such provision and will ensure that children and young people can easily find out what is available. There are already many opportunities for children and young people, supported by the expertise of county staff, such as in schools and youth settings, Cambridgeshire Music and Cambridgeshire Outdoors, as well early years settings and colleges and a range of external partners. We wish to build on these strengths.

Why promote Culture for Children and Young People in Cambridgeshire?

The enjoyment and sense of achievement provided by cultural experiences are important in their own right and can have a lasting influence on children and young people. They provide an opportunity for individuals to find their strengths as well as new leisure interests. They offer ways for children to understand the diverse and complex world around them and learn skills of leadership and team working. Such experiences can also boost self-esteem and help children become more confident and successful learners. The Local Authority also recognises the potential of culture for improving community life.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has identified 'Children and young people' as one of its five strategic priorities in working towards improving the quality of life for all through cultural and sporting activities. Cambridgeshire Culture takes account of this priority and many other national initiatives.

What do we mean by culture?

Culture plays a pivotal role in the fabric of our society, but definitions and interpretations of culture vary. Cambridgeshire Culture takes a broad view to encompass traditional and popular performing and visual arts and literature, as well as wider-reaching aspects of heritage, history and socio-cultural belonging.

More specifically we are adopting the following interpretation of culture as:

a combination of all the processes involved in creating, presenting, understanding and learning about seven activity areas:

- **the visual arts** (including 2 and 3D work, public art, graphic design, textiles, fashion, ceramics, wood and stone carving, metal work and photography)
- **the performing arts** (including dance, drama, musical performance, physical theatre, storytelling, street arts, carnival arts, festivals, puppeteers, performance poetry and circus)
- **film and media** (including the making, recording and editing of animations, games, websites, film and music)
- **literature** (including libraries, books and press, poetry and prose)
- **sport and health** (including Olympic and non-Olympic sports, extreme sports, outdoor education, rural and urban trails and walks, cycle networks and the rights of way network)
- **heritage** (including museums and archives, the built and natural heritage/environment, landscapes, coast, parks and gardens)
- **tourism** (including food and drink, attractions, tourism initiatives, cultural tourism, accommodation and hospitality services)

It is important that we seize the momentum from the build-up to the 2012 Olympic Games to encourage children and young people to get involved in sport and to find out more about how they could be directly involved in the Games through, for example, volunteering, or indirectly through linking with children from other countries and cultures and to participate in the associated Cultural Olympiad.

Our Key Principles

The Local Authority will adhere to the following key principles in all aspects of its support for cultural activities:

- All cultural activities should be of the highest quality
- A broad range of cultural experiences should be promoted
- There should be equitable and inclusive access to opportunities for children and young people across the County. However, there should be some prioritisation to reduce inequalities for children and young people who are socially and/or economically disadvantaged, have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who may not have easy access to activities
- Activities should promote intercultural understanding and community cohesion by offering an insight into, and opportunities for sharing in, the cultural lives of different groups and communities
- Collaboration will be proactively promoted with a range of other partners: other local authorities, third sector, community-based and professional providers of cultural activities.

2. The Cambridgeshire Cultural Guarantee for Children and Young People

Our vision is for a broad entitlement to cultural activities for all children and young people aged 0-19 in Cambridgeshire.

These will be offered in both formal and informal settings and by a wide range of providers. However, we wish there to be a 'guarantee' to a minimum entitlement of cultural activities for all children and young people in Cambridgeshire county schools. This will hopefully lead to children and young people developing an enthusiasm for at least one cultural activity, which they can develop both within and beyond school.

The guarantee

Our aspiration is that all county schools will want to commit to providing a guarantee to cultural activities for **all** children and young people in their school, as some already have. We hope that other settings, such as independent schools and colleges, may also wish to make a similar commitment. This guarantee will be different in each school and will build on existing provision, but a guarantee might include the opportunity for children and young people to:

- see a professional standard live performance of music, dance or drama
- participate in a performance, whether as a performer, organiser or technical support
- see an exhibition of high quality visual art
- engage with library and/or archive services
- learn about and make films
- visit a cultural centre, for example, a museum or heritage site
- see a professional standard sports event
- participate in a sporting or outdoor pursuits event
- participate in a residential outdoor or environmental education experience
- work with, and learn from, an expert practitioner in the fields of music, story telling, poetry, the visual arts, dance, drama or sport

Activities might form part of the school curriculum or be offered outside the school day. Schools will want to involve children and young people in developing the guarantee and shaping activities. Involving parents at all stages is likely to enhance parental engagement with their child's learning experiences.

Activities should be representative of, and take account of, the increasingly diverse population of Cambridgeshire and the UK, so that they not only enrich children's cultural experiences, but also enhance their understanding and appreciation of the broader 'culture' in which they live.

In all activities children should be participating at a level commensurate with their ability and potential, with opportunities to demonstrate and celebrate particular talents. Over time, activities should offer both breadth and depth of experience and routes to accreditation, where appropriate. Clubs within and beyond the school can offer opportunities to develop skills and harness enthusiasm.

3. County Council Support

Cambridgeshire Culture Steering Group

A Steering Group has been set up and its role is to:

- Give direction to the implementation of Cambridgeshire Culture
- Agree the use of the Cambridgeshire Culture Fund
- Ensure the maintenance and development of the County Art Collection and oversee the loan scheme to schools
- Select bids to fund projects

Cambridgeshire Culture Fund

In 2006, elected members decided to sell some of the more valuable paintings from the County Art Collection. The intention was that the profits should be used to offer cultural opportunities for children and young people in the county.

The Steering Group will manage the fund and allocate resources to support cultural activities within the county. The fund will also be used to support the employment of an Officer and the maintenance and development of the Art Collection.

Cambridgeshire Culture Officer

The Officer will lead the implementation of Cambridgeshire Culture through:

- Supporting schools to develop their 'guarantee'
- Supporting schools and youth settings to develop opportunities
- Developing and implementing new areas of activity
- Making effective links with local and national partners to ensure a wide range of opportunities and avoid unnecessary overlap
- Sharing good practice
- Contributing to a database of specialists who can work in schools and youth settings eg professional artists, performers, sports coaches - both individuals and organisations
- Ensuring that children and young people know how to access opportunities
- Seeking external funding to complement school and county budgets

County Council Support

County Council Services

A range of teams, services and resources in the County Council can offer support.

Within the Office of Children and Young People:

Cambridgeshire Art Collection

The County Council owns a collection of paintings and prints originally assembled as a resource for schools. These have not been available to schools for some years but schools will now be able to select items to borrow from a central database.

Cambridgeshire Music

Cambridgeshire Music facilitates and provides a range of opportunities for young people to engage in music making. It provides opportunities across the county including schemes to support access to disadvantaged young people. It works in partnership with arts development teams, other professional providers in the county and local schools and networks to establish high quality access to music activities.

Cambridgeshire Outdoors

Cambridgeshire has an Outdoor Education Service and Environmental Education Service, with centres at Burwell House, Grafham Water Centre, Stibbington Centre, Upware Centre, Wisbech Castle and Coldham's Wind Farm. These provide outdoor adventurous and environmental education opportunities, ranging from residential experiences to shorter activity sessions, which offer cultural experience in heritage, the arts, sport and health.

County Play Strategy

Play is a vital part of the lives of children and young people. The Early Years and Childcare Service is responsible for promoting play opportunities for children from 0-14. The Play Officer liaises with District Councils, Locality Managers and schools to ensure that there are play and recreational facilities in all localities.

Specialist Schools

Schools with a formal designation as a specialist school in the arts or sport have a particular responsibility to share expertise and to support developments in partner schools.

In addition, there are four Sports Partnerships within the county (funded by the DCSF). Each partnership is based at a Specialist Sports College with links to other secondary schools and partner primary schools, special schools and pupil referral units. The overall aim of the partnerships is to increase the participation of young people in high quality PE and sport.

County Council Support

Locality Teams

The fourteen locality teams provide an integrated service for children and young people at community level, which includes, in particular, promotion of:

- programmes such as 'Positive Activities for Young People', which enhances links to wider sports and cultural activities
- the Youth Offer, which seeks to ensure that children, young people and their families/carers have access to a range of integrated services, including social and recreational activities
- direct funding for some young people to give them access to leisure activities
- cultural activities in youth settings.

Within the broader County Council:

Arts Development

The aim of the Service is to develop and support arts activity across the County, across age range, across art forms. The work, necessarily, is in partnership, and close working relationships exist with the district councils, Arts Council East, colleagues in the county council, and external voluntary organisations. The Service provides information and develops partnerships to raise funding for project-based work. It also provides a service to assist schools in identifying and making contact with professional artists.

There are several projects with Children and Young People. Currently, the largest project with schools is 'Vital Communities'. This is a unique action research project, resourced by the seven local authorities of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and Arts Council England East. Through a vibrant, innovative and inclusive programme of high-quality creative activities (dance, drama, film, literature, music, visual art), the project aims to demonstrate the impact of the arts upon individual and community development.

Sports Development

The County Council is a major provider of sports facilities, mainly through schools. A Sports Development Officer and the Manager of the Swimming Service work closely with the PE Adviser, the Outdoor Education Adviser and the External Grants Officer to ensure that the County benefits from national initiatives to develop facilities and expertise for the development of sport in the County.

Cambridgeshire Libraries and Information Service

Through a network of 32 libraries, 8 mobile libraries and partnership in 10 Library Access Points, Cambridgeshire Libraries provide a range of services to meet the recreational, educational and cultural needs of children and young people. All libraries offer after-school and Saturday opening and welcome children of all ages. Early years activities for babies and toddlers, including story and rhymetimes, together with the book gift scheme 'Bookstart', provide opportunities to improve language and literacy skills and to develop a love of books and reading, whilst reward schemes such as the "Bookstart Crawl" help foster library use and borrowing. Regular programmes of visits to libraries by school classes help familiarise children with their local library as well as teaching them information-finding skills and encouraging them to experiment with their reading by discovering new authors. Further opportunities to develop reading and learning and to promote parental involvement are provided by after-school reading groups, the annual Summer Reading Challenge, participation in "Read it Again!" the Cambridgeshire Children's Picture Book Award and through the many promotional events and activities taking place throughout the year, often in partnership with other agencies. In addition, the Schools Library Service encourages and supports the development of libraries in schools and through services like 'Toddle-In' for nursery settings and 'Summer Reading Challenges' seeks to make the library offer more widely available.

County Council Support

Museum Development

The County Council provides only one museum service directly (the Cromwell Museum in Huntingdon), but there are nearly 30 museums in the County, which the Museums Development Officer works with and supports. Most museums offer a service to schools ranging from self-supported school visits with simple learning resources to sessions based on the National Curriculum, which encourage engagement and development of skills and confidence. The Museums Development Officer works with museums and external partners to develop museum resources such as loans boxes for use both at the museum and in school.

Archives and Local Studies

Cambridgeshire Archives and Local Studies services collects and promotes the use of a wide range of resources relating to the county for people to discover their local and family history. These include original documents dating from the 13th century onwards, maps, photographs and illustrations, books, journals and newspapers, audiovisual and electronic media. The service can offer opportunities for school class visits linked to National Curriculum topics and will work with teachers to assist with project work. Individual volunteer and student placements can be arranged for older children to get involved in conservation and enquiry (detective) work. Further work with children, young people and schools is planned for the future, with the appointment of an Education and Outreach Officer.

Archaeology

Cambridgeshire Archaeology is one of the country's leading exponents of public archaeology. It actively promotes education and community projects, working in partnership with District Councils, Parish Councils, English Heritage, schools and local communities. The work includes: schools/college talks and projects; educational resources and National Curriculum advice; free artefact handling packs for schools; work experience and volunteer opportunities; free school tours to archaeological sites in Cambridgeshire; community archaeology projects.

Wisbech Cultural Offer

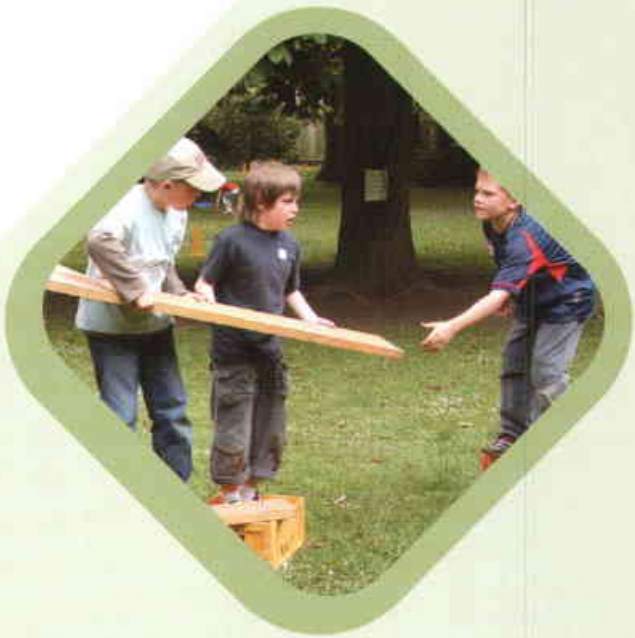
The Museums Libraries and Archives Council is working with the County Council, schools and other partners to audit, develop and deliver cultural opportunities in the Wisbech area, for children, young people and the wider community.

4. Working with partners

Working collaboratively with a range of external local, regional and national partners will be essential to securing the breadth and richness of provision to which we are committed. The county council is keen to develop closer working relationships with cultural providers in order that children and young people have access to high quality, and safe, activities.

It is not possible to list all these partners, but three key ones are:

- The many high quality professional, voluntary and community cultural organisations in Cambridgeshire, which work with children and young people and offer opportunities for participation in cultural activities.
- The five district councils, which offer a broad range of cultural activities both in conjunction with schools, youth settings and voluntary groups, as well as independent activities. Each council offers different activities and projects. The councils fund some schemes and also seek external funds.
- Community Sport Coaches, who are part-time coaches, managed by Living Sport and Governing Bodies and based mainly at Sports Colleges. They work both in secondary and primary schools, providing quality sports coaching and helping to develop links for young people into sports clubs.



Further Information

If you would like further copies of this booklet, or the text on audio cassette, in Braille, large print or other languages, please contact Dawn Rogers on:

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